

REMARKS

The final office action mailed January 14, 2005, maintains the rejection of the claims over Kuhn (US Pat. 6,029,132). In response to the arguments presented by the applicant in the previous response, mailed September 19, 2004, the office action addresses the applicant's arguments as follows (emphasis added):

1. Applicant's arguments filed 8/26/2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The applicant argues to traverse prior art rejection based on limitations "searching a graph in which each path through the graph identifies a sequence of segments of the source utterances", "forming a first part of the graph that encodes a sequence of segments and a corresponding sequence of unit labels for each of the sources utterances," and "forming a second part that encodes allowable transitions between segments of different utterances." **However, Kuhn et al. (US 6029132) anticipates all the limitations listed above in that a plurality of paths in decision tree must be searched in order to generate n-best phoneme candidates (col. 4, lines 30-57).**

Kuhn et al. also teach the step of forming a first part of the graph that encodes a sequence of segments and a corresponding sequence of unit labels for each of the sources utterances (Text-based Pronunciation Generator 16 in figure 1 assign phoneme candidates to each letter) and forming a second part that encodes allowable transitions between segments of different utterances (Phoneme-mixed Tree score estimator 20 in figure 1, determines the transition from one phoneme to another).

The applicant respectfully requests that if the rejection over Kuhn is to be maintained, that the office action address with specificity the arguments presented in the numbered sections 1. through 3. of the reply of September 19, 2004. Although column 4, lines 30-57, of Kuhn have been identified in the office action, their pertinence to each of the required elements of the rejected claims is not clear and the specific arguments in the reply have not been addressed.

The applicant's representative, J. Robin Rohlicek, also thanks Examiner Vo for the telephone conference conducted on February 10, 2005, in which the Kuhn reference was discussed with reference to the claims, including independent claim 1 and dependent claims 11 and 13-15. The applicant's representative reiterated that the Kuhn reference deals with an approach to converting letter sequences to sequences of phoneme (or other sound) labels, while the pending claims involve selection of segments of source utterances (e.g., portions of

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waveforms) based on pronunciation of a target utterance, for example, represented in terms of a sequence of phoneme labels.

The examiner and the applicant's representative agreed that the applicant would submit a request for a supplemental office action, and that the examiner would consider the pending claims in view of further references previously cited by the applicant or known to the examiner.

Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:

Feb. 10, 2005

J. Robin Rohlicek

J. Robin Rohlicek, J.D., Ph.D.

Reg. No. 43,349

Fish & Richardson P.C.  
225 Franklin Street  
Boston, MA 02110-2804  
Telephone: (617) 542-5070  
Facsimile: (617) 542-8906

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